

"Rodesenda"
S. Anne's Day, July 26, 1933.

My dear Cousins Margot, Caroline and Mabel:

Saint Anne was the mother of the Blessed Virgin. Her name does not appear in the Kalendar of the Anglican Church, but the Roman and Greek Churches keep the Twenty Sixth of July in her memory, and I like to do so, for I think she is a most important character in history, as being the grand-mother of our Lord, in His human nature. Speaking of grand-parents reminds me that your grand-mother Weeks tells me that you three girls have adopted me as your grand-father. That is quite an honour. I trust I can come up to the standard. Being a grand-father is a quite new experience for me, but I have been practising on my house-keeper's grandson, Charles Joseph Bywater, aged eleven, who spends a good part of the days during summer vacation with us, so perhaps I will be able to measure up in your case. It will be a change at any rate from being just a cousin - cousins are so common.

This brings us to the story of your great great grand-father, Joseph Weeks and your great great grand-mother, Aurelia Barlow Weeks. When I sent the second copy of the picture of their daughters, Susan, Aurelia and Margaret, it was in my mind to tell you something of the history of the picture and of the three girls therein portrayed. The photograph is a copy which my sister, your cousin Helen Maria Finley had made in Boston some fifty years ago from an old daguerotype, which was taken in about 1840, of

The Three Weeks Girls

So that you may become acquainted with them, I will tell you a little story.

Once upon a time (I used to wonder, why "upon"), Once upon a time there lived in Fairfield, Connecticut, one Dimon Barlow, and when he became a man (he was born 9 October 1776) he chose for his wife, and in that choice showed that he was a man of good judgment, Susanna Seelye, about the year 1799, when he was twenty three, and she the same age within five months. In point of fact Susanna was five months older than Dimon, and my own opinion is that she was the "boss" always of that establishment. Yet, you are not to understand from this remark that Mr. Barlow was lacking in enterprise. A man who could go out from an old town like Fairfield, Connecticut, up the Connecticut River two hundred fifty miles into what was then new country, clear off the land, build a house (practically with his own hands) of brick made on his own land, and furnished as to door handles, latches, etc. with hand hammered iron work fashioned in a forge, also right on his farm, and with the wood-work furnished from the trees which he had to cut down to clear the land, must have had a strong character. On his tombstone in the cemetery in Fairfield, Vermont, for that is what the Barlows and the three other families who went with them from Connecticut, named their new home, is inscribed the lines from Pope's "Essay on Man".

"Slave to no sect, who takes no private road,
But looks through Nature, up to Nature's GOD".

The house that Dimon built was large enough for a large family, and the numerous servants which were required to take care of it and the farm; and before many years the family was provided, and in the good old fashioned way, for there were

Nine Barlow Children

Namely		Married [handwritten]
1. Betsey was born	29 March 1792	Spencer
2. Joel	6 February 1794	
3. Aurelia	18 February 1796	Joseph Weeks
4. Noah	3 May 1798	Margaret Postlethwaite
5. Horace	25 January 1800	
6. Susan	23 June 1802	Hiram Bellows
7. Daniel	25 October 1805	
8. Abel	2 March 1806	
9. Charlotte	25 February 1812	Victor Atwood

quite a family.

Sometime, perhaps, I will tell you about them, who they married, where they went to live, and about their children, but that's another story, and it would take a book to tell you of the life on that old Barlow farm, as I have heard it from the lips of my mother, Susan Barlow Finley, who was one of the Three Weeks Girls, but I am getting ahead of this story. I have visited the Barlow house, which has since been torn down - a fine building even a hundred years after Dimon built it - and I have stood in the "best room" where on the Thirteenth of January 1819 were married your great great grand-mother Aurelia Barlow and Joseph weeks. Joseph and Aurelia went over the hills to Saint Albans, about nine miles west of Fairfield, and about three miles from Lake Champlain, and there they started the Weeks family on the Weeks farm and in the house which is standing to-day in good preservation, and which I hope you will see some day, for there were born

The Three weeks Girls

Susan Barlow Born 25 December 1820

Charlotte Aurelia Born 3 October 1824

Margaret Postlethwaite Born 7 August 1834

and four brothers, and a little sister who did not like this world and so went back to that country from which she came, after only eight months stay here. So now we have arrived at last at the beginning of the story of the three Weeks girls, and that will take several chapters to tell. Probably the story of Susan will be a whole book, for of course I am specially interested in her history because she was my Mother. and then there is a whole book-ful in the story of their brother Joseph Seelye Weeks, who was your great grand-father, and Mary his wife and their eight sons But this story is about the three sisters who are in the picture.

I have a picture of three other girls, Margot, and Caroline and Mabel, which was taken when they were about two, four and six. I suppose the picture of the three Weeks girls was taken when Susan was about twenty-five and Charlotte about twenty-one, and Margaret about ten. Charlotte was always called Aurelia - just Aunt Aurelia to her many nephews and nieces, and a very dear Aunt Aurelia she wan. She was the one to stay at home on the farm to care for her father and mother in their declining years, and later, in a cottage in town which stood next to her Aunt Susan Bellows home, now the site of the Bellows School, to care for her invalid brother Horace, who like herself never married. But Susan did on June First 1848, when she and David Finley "stood up" in St. Luke's Church, St. Albans, and began the life together which was to be a very happy one with eight children to keep up the good old custom of their fore-fathers.

Margaret Postlethwaite the youngest went when she was a little girl to live with her Aunt Susan Barlow

Bellows and her husband Hiram Bellows, who had no children, and she grew up as their daughter and took their name for her second name, so that she was Margaret Bellows Weeks. She became the wife of Edward A. Sowles, and their only child is your cousin in Burlington Vt., Susan Bellows Sowles.

This is the story of the Three Weeks Girls, up to the time of their ~~having~~ leaving their old home. Perhaps some day I will tell you the story of Susan: about how she used to go over the hills to visit Grandmother Barlow in Fairfield; and about her going to school in Burlington, Vt. where she was confirmed in old St. Paul's Church; and of her going with her husband David to live in Champlain, N. Y, twenty eight miles from St. Albans across Lake Champlain; and about her three daughters, the Three Finley Girls and "Me Too".

Your affectionate adopted Grandfather,

(Me Too)

Horace Blunt Finley